

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	13/01/2011
Inspector	Anna Davies
Type of setting	Childminder

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the childminding

The childminder was registered in 2001. She lives with her husband and three adult children in a medium sized town outside of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. The ground floor of the childminder's house is used for childminding and there is a fully enclosed garden for outside play. The house is within walking distance of local amenities such as schools, the library, shops, toddler groups and parks. The family has a pet dog.

The childminder is registered on the Early Years Register as well as the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. She is registered to care for a maximum of three children under eight years at any one time, of whom no more than three may be in the early years age range. She is currently minding one child in this age group who attends full-time education. She also offers care to children aged over five years.

The childminder is a member of the National Childminding Association and is working towards the Early Years and Childcare Quality Framework.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are offered a good range of stimulating activities and learning experiences which ensures that they make good progress in their learning and development. Observation, planning and assessment systems are well established. All of the required policies, procedures and most records are in place and used effectively to safeguard children's health, safety and welfare. The childminder recognises each child's individuality and effectively promotes inclusive practice so that children feel secure and valued. She has established good relationships with parents and partnerships with other providers also delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage to children in her care are beginning to be established. The childminder has a positive attitude towards self-evaluation, continuing to review her practice and plan for further development.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- record details of practised evacuation drills in a fire log book of any problems encountered and how they were resolved
- develop closer links with other settings providing for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, with specific regard to sharing information about children's learning and development.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The childminder has a good knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children procedures and has recently attended advanced training in child protection; this knowledge is underpinned by a clear policy which is shared with parents. Good quality risk assessments are in place to ensure that hazards are identified and minimised. As a result, children are cared for in a safe environment. The childminder is well organised; clear documentation and good record keeping promotes the safety and welfare of the children and underpins the good quality care offered. However, although regular fire evacuation drills are practised with the children, these are not recorded so that they can be evaluated to help inform the effectiveness of future drills.

The childminder provides a welcoming and inclusive environment where each child is valued and they are clearly happy, settled and comfortable in her care. Examples of children's work as well as stimulating posters and information are displayed in the hallway. This helps to make the environment child friendly and shows children that their contributions are valued. She has a good knowledge of child development and uses this well as she plans and delivers activities, thereby enabling every child to achieve. The provision is well resourced with toys of good quality. These are rotated to reflect children's interests and ages. Children have access to toys and resources at their level enabling them to make independent choices in their play.

The childminder works well in partnership with parents to ensure children's individual needs are fully met. Clear information is gathered from parents about their child before they start and settling-in procedures are flexible so that the transition is smooth. The childminder discusses with parents about their child's day or the childminder is happy to complete a daily communication sheet if parents wish or a diary, for example, when children stay for longer periods in the school holidays. Feedback from parents is very positive. They comment about how pleased they are with the childcare offered and that the childminder always goes out of her way to help. The childminder understands about forming partnerships with other providers such as the Reception teacher at the local school. However, these have yet to be fully established so that two-way information is shared about children's learning and development, enabling the childminder to complement their delivery of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The childminder has a clear vision about her childminding and this is displayed for parents and children; it focuses on positive outcomes for children and peace of mind for the parents. She has completed the Ofsted self-evaluation form and is part way through completing the Early Years and Quality Framework with her early years advisor. She is able to reflect upon what she does well and is committed to further professional development. The childminder is aware of areas she wishes to improve and works to address these. For example, since the last inspection she has improved aspects of paperwork such as ensuring registers are accurately maintained and that written permission to use public transport is obtained from

parents. Both of these improvements help to safeguard children.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

The childminder has a clear understanding of children's learning needs, interests, the stage of development they are at and the aspects of development she wishes to promote next. She supports children effectively as they play. For example, when children return from school they are thrilled to see the play dough activity awaiting them. The childminder takes their lead and encourages them to persevere as they try to push the play dough through the mould to make 'hair' before sharing their observation that 'this looks like worms'. She uses this opportunity to consolidate children's recognition of different colours and praises their efforts. The childminder promotes discussions about subjects she knows are important to the children such as their family; this makes children feel valued and aids their good communication skills as other children join in the conversation. Also, when older children mix their words up, the childminder sensitively repeats the sentence back to the child using the correct word. This helps children's ever developing vocabulary without negating their attempts at using language.

Clear observation, planning and assessment procedures have been established which enables the childminder to effectively plan stimulating and meaningful activities to meet individual children's learning needs. At present, the childminder only cares for school-aged children. Those in Reception year have well thought out activities planned for them which link to all areas of learning. Regular observations are recorded and next steps identified. The childminder gathers a variety of evidence to demonstrate the good progress children are making. Summary record forms are used to periodically summarise children's development and progress towards the early learning goals and this information is shared with parents. Parents have opportunities to contribute their own observations and comments about what their child can do.

Children are clearly happy and settled in the childminder's care. They talk about how they enjoy coming to the childminder's and their favourite activities. They have good relationships with one another, asking each other if they would like to join in. Lots of activities are planned to encourage discussion which further helps children's growing language and communication skills. They have good opportunities to practise their reading and writing skills. For example, they use a good range of books and a range of child-friendly posters adorn the hallway walls, giving children opportunities to recognise simple words and phrases. Counting and number skills are developing well through a range of activities such as songs, looking at the telephone numbers of people who can help them and talking about different ages of people and pets. Children confidently use number language in play. For example, as they cut play dough they exclaim 'I've cut it in half' and correctly identify that they have four pieces when they cut it again. Children learn about nature as they collect conkers and leaves for printing with. They learn to plant and take care of sunflowers and herbs. These activities help children to learn about the world around them. They utilise a good range of resources and toys that

reflect diversity and this helps them to begin to understand about differences and similarities in people. Posters containing many positive images also help this aspect of their development. Children become involved in their local community, learning about local, traditional festivals. They show an increasing understanding of how things work, ably giving others instructions about how to use electronic toys. All of these simple activities begin to lay the foundations to support the children's future economic well-being.

Children benefit from regular daily exercise and fresh air. They take part in music and movement sessions which helps them with their coordination. Activities such as carving pumpkins and mixing ingredients when making biscuits help to develop children's fine motor skills. Children's creativity is developing through a good range of art and craft activities and role play where they can develop their imagination.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted. Children are cared for in a very clean and hygienic environment. They understand about following good hygiene routines and reminder posters are clearly displayed in the downstairs bathroom. Children use individual flannels to wipe their faces which helps to reduce the risk of cross-contamination. Snacks are provided by the childminder after school and these are healthy, balanced and nutritious. The childminder promotes healthy eating and is happy to provide meals if she were to begin caring for younger children during the day again. Children have free access to drinks ensuring they remain hydrated at all times. Children feel safe and secure and this is demonstrated through their contented, happy and confident disposition. They begin to learn about road safety when out and about as well as 'stranger danger'. Safety rules in the childminder's home help to ensure that children know what is expected and as a result they learn how to keep themselves and others safe. Clear documentation is in place to record any medication administered and any accidents if they occur. The childminder has a good understanding of behaviour management in accordance with children's ages and stages of understanding. She is a good role model herself and as a result, children behave well and treat both the childminder and each other, with respect.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong
Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound
Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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